



## PRESS RELEASE

Bo, Sierra Leone, 14<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Page 1 / 2

Regional Agency for Agriculture and Food (RAAF)

### **ECOWAS Donates 500 Metric Tons of White Rice to Support National Response Plan of Sierra Leone**

***Based on the food security vulnerability analysis of 2024, the ECOWAS Commission undertook to assist needy Member States including Sierra Leone with food grains using the stocks of its Regional Food Security Reserve. Due to various circumstances, the intervention in Sierra Leone was postponed until this July 14, 2025.***

On behalf of the ECOWAS Commission President, Dr Alieu Omar Touray, and the ECOWAS Commissioner for Economic Affairs and Agriculture, Mrs. Massandjé Touré-Litsé, the Resident Representative of ECOWAS in the Republic of Sierra Leone, Ambassador John Azumah, handed over 500 metric tons of white rice to Dr Therisa Tenneh Dick, Deputy Minister 1, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security who received the food grains on behalf of the Government. He also congratulated the President of Sierra Leone, His Excellency Brigadier General (Rtd) Dr. Julius Maada Bio, for his ascension to the chairmanship of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS.

“This expression of regional solidarity is a contribution from ECOWAS to support the various efforts already underway. ECOWAS congratulates and strongly encourages the Government of Sierra Leone to continue its immense efforts towards curbing the current difficult food situation. ECOWAS remains committed to stand alongside Sierra Leone and the other Member States in facing the various challenges”, Ambassador Azumah added.

“The donation will help to strengthen the resilience of the vulnerable populations affected by the difficult food situation”, Deputy Minister 1, Dr Therisa Tenneh Dick said. “It is truly an honour for the Government of Sierra Leone to receive these Cereals through this important ceremony which symbolizes the solidarity between the ECOWAS Commission, Member States and especially the People of Sierra Leone. It is a timely intervention as it will help us assist our brothers and sisters who are in need. It will also support in building greater resilience for our food system”, she concluded after expressing the country’s gratitude to ECOWAS for their brotherhood, friendship and solidarity.

Although this intervention by the ECOWAS Regional Food Security Reserve was based on food and nutrition insecurity analyses of 2024, it remains relevant as the situation in Sierra Leone remains difficult in 2025. As a matter of fact, the “Cadre Harmonisé” data indicate that the number of people requiring food assistance to cover their basic food needs in the region could reach about 49.4 million between June and August 2025, including Sierra Leone.



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**Page 2 / 2**

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The intervention in Sierra Leone falls within ECOWAS expression of solidarity to its citizens undergoing a difficult food situation. Distribution operations may begin in the next few days to bring these food items to the targeted population.

ECOWAS, therefore, believes that developing food security storage at three complementary levels – local stocks, national security stocks and regional stocks – enables the region to strengthen its risk management capacity and food sovereignty.

Created on 28 February 2013 by Supplementary Act to the ECOWAS Revised Treaty, the Regional Food Security Reserve is an instrument for measuring regional public policies in the agricultural sector, thus one of the main pillars of the ECOWAS of the Peoples.

ECOWAS is grateful to the various technical and financial partners who have been supporting the operationalization of the Regional Food Security Reserve since 2016. Such partners are mainly the European Union, the French Development Agency (AFD), the Spanish Cooperation (AECID), USAID and the World Bank.

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